

DUCIT AMOR PATRIAEE

# Niagara Historical Society

No. 13

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A CANADIAN HEROINE

AN HISTORIC HOUSE

NAMES ONLY

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL'S CHURCH

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PRICE 25 CENTS

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RE-PRINTED

WELLAND TRIBUNE PRINT  
1916

# NIAGARA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Its objects are the encouragement of the study of Canadian History and Literature, the collection and preservation of Canadian Historical Relics, the building up of Canadian loyalty and patriotism and the preservation of all historical landmarks in this vicinity.

The annual fee is fifty cents.

The Society was formed in December, 1895. The annual meeting is held on October 13th. Since May, 1896, over six thousand articles have been gathered in the Historical Room—twenty-eight pamphlets have been published, eleven historical sites have been marked, an Historical building erected at a cost of over \$5,000, and a catalogue published.

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## PREFACE

In sending out our thirteenth publication we would hope for it as favorable a reception as has been granted to our other issues. The story of St. Mark's and St. Andrew's appears in No. 7 and a short sketch of the Baptist church in No. 12, these are now followed by the history of St. Vincent de Paul's church told clearly and sympathetically by Mrs. Greene. It is hoped that the history of the churches of the town will be made more complete by that of the Methodist church in a later number.

Much valuable material is on hand for future issues and we hope that any who can contribute documents bearing on the family history of the early settlers will do so, thus more light will be thrown on the early history of our country.

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### Preface to Second Edition

The 1904 edition of our pamphlet number 13, has for some time been exhausted and numerous requests have been made for its reprinting. We hope in the course of time, to have complete sets of all our publications now reaching number 28.



ST. VINCENT DE PAUL'S CHURCH



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## A WIFE'S DEVOTION

A Canadian Heroine of Nearly Eighty Years Ago

(By *Janet Carnochan*)

The story of the heroic exertions of Maria Wait during four years, first to save the life of her husband and next to obtain a full pardon or some amelioration of his sufferings when a prisoner in Van Dieman's Land, is known to comparatively few persons and forms a remarkably interesting page of Canadian History, giving us glimpses of governors, judges, lawyers; a journey in the first place of seven hundred miles in the days before the advent of railways, introducing us to officials in Toronto, Kingston, Quebec, Lieutenant-Governor Arthur and Lord Durham, Bishop Mountain, Wm. Hamilton Merritt, M.P.P., Jesse Ketchum, and affords the dramatic ending of her labors, the respite arriving only half an hour before that appointed for the execution of the prisoners. Next she travels from Niagara to Kingston to visit her husband in the prison at Fort Henry and returns to obtain signatures, this indefatigable woman, then leaving her babe, takes a journey of three thousand miles, crossing the Atlantic to intercede for her husband even at the foot of the throne.

We now have glimpses of Charles Buller, the Secretary of Lord Durham, Joseph Hume, Mrs. Fry, Miss Strickland, Mrs. Opie, Mary Howitt, the Philanthropists Buxton, Clarkson, Wilberforce, the Patriot Dan O'Connell, Sir Robert Peel, Prince Albert, the young Queen, our heroine meeting the best in the fashionable, literary, political, philanthropic, and religious world of that day.

Her letters show a well trained mind, an affectionate heart, an indomitable will, and a deeply religious spirit, while those of her husband show great vigor and close reasoning powers, he having had some legal training, and we can understand and pardon the bitterness with which he speaks when we remember his sufferings. To all her other difficulties was added that of insufficient means. We note with interest that though so much is recorded of hardships and hard heartedness, the letters of both husband and wife tell of many deeds of kindness, the dark record is broken by the silver lining of the

cloud; the benevolence of the people of three countries is recorded, in Canada, United States, and England.

Maria Wait, nee Smith, seems from her letters to have been born not far from Niagara, as was also Benjamin Wait, he says "I was one of Canada's sons, born, bred and rocked in the cradle of liberal principles. She was my own, my native land." She was educated by Robert Randall, who was also the early friend and patron of her husband. On the tombstone of Robert Randall, at Lundy's Lane it is recorded that he was "a victim of Colonial Misrule". He was fourteen years in the Legislature and went to England to complain of the wrongs of Canada, was ruined in health and fortune, though not in mental energy. Dying in 1834 he had taken part in the efforts to break the power of the Family Compact, but was spared the later troubles. These letters imply that the writers suffered from being his friends.

The book from which the most of this story is derived is a rather rare one.

"Letters from Van Dieman's Land, written during four years imprisonment for political offences, also letters of Mrs. Wait." The book is dedicated to Thaddeus Smith, a brother of Mrs. Wait, and was published in 1843.

The devoted wife returned from England to Canada to petition Lord Sydenham, and finally the long separated husband and wife met, he having escaped in an open boat was picked up by a U.S. Whaler; wrecked on the coast of Brazil; spent a month in Rio de Janeiro and finally reached New York and found his wife teaching in Buffalo. But alas this loving wife whether worn out by anxiety or the fatigue she had undergone, or from other cause lived little more than a year after the return of her husband, who, notwithstanding the extraordinary hardships he had undergone, to which some of his companions succumbed, lived to the age of 82, dying in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in 1895.

Whatever opinion may be held of those who took part in the Rebellion of 1837-8, whether justified or not, there can be no question that we are now enjoying the advantages gained by that struggle, there can be no question either as to the cruel treatment meted out both in Lower Canada where houses were burnt and savagery reigned, or to those executed here, particularly those banished, the treatment of felons begin given to political prisoners, they being herded with the vilest of convicts. There is no question either as to the tyranny, injustice and oppression of the Family Compact of which in these days we can have no conception. While the total incapacity of Mackenzie as a military commander must be noted, and while

we must severly condemn him for bringing from another country a force to invade his own land, we remember that it is difficult sometimes to say what constitutes treason. When successful the leader is a hero, a patriot, when unsuccessful a rebel and a traitor.

But of the deeds of Mrs. Wait there can be no divided opinion. Other women have performed heroic deeds. Catharine Douglas, who to save the life of her king, James the First, of Scotland, in Stirling Castle, thrust her arm into the staple in the absence of the bolt, breaking the bone, this was the deed of a moment; our own Laura Secord's was the deed of a day, long and toilsome indeed. Helen Walker, the original of Jeanie Deans to save the life of a darling sister travelled painfully for weeks. Prascovia Lopouloff the Elizabeth in the Exiles of Siberia to save her father, endured hardships for months, but this heroic woman, undeterred by difficulties, disappointments and opposition gave years to the rescue of her husband and his fellow prisoners, travelling many thousands of miles through Canada and to England, and finally contemplated going to Van Dieman's Land to be near the loved one and help in any way in her power.

In Dent's history of the Rebellion is a very graphic description of the Court House in Niagara at the trial of Robert Gourlay in 1819, very much in the style of Macaulay's Trial of Warren Hastings, and in this same building, now the home of waifs from the old land, was Benjamin Wait confined. A few days before, Morreau had been tried, found guilty and executed, now sixteen more were sentenced to death, of these the sentence of thirteen was commuted, and three, Chandler, McLeod and Wait were left for execution. A letter to a friend begins thus. "You, Benjamin Wait shall be taken from the court to the place from which you last came and there remain until the 25th August, when between the hours of eleven and one you shall be drawn on a hurdle to the place of execution and there hanged by the neck until you are dead. The Lord have mercy on your soul! This sentence was pronounced by Judge Jones, 11th August, 1838. The house was crammed, my counsel was Alexander Stewart." He goes on to tell of being led back to his ironbound stone cell; (the iron grating scarcely a foot square which afforded the only chance to see the light of day is in the Niagara Historical Room and two culverts in the town were formed of the stone walls of the condemned cell.) Mrs. Wait had taken a room near the jail, the 24th regiment was on guard, afterwards the 43rd, the commander of the latter being much more compassionate to the prisoners than the first. Petitions for pardon

were signed and taken by his father and Rev. Mr. Johnson, of Drummondville, to Toronto and Kingston, but preparations for the execution were made, a hangman brought from Toronto, to avoid what had occurred in the case of Morreau when the Sheriff had to perform this repulsive task, one hundred dollars having been offered to a black man in vain.

In a letter from Niagara to a friend, dated Oct. 13th, 1838, Mrs. Wait tells that on the evening after the sentence had been pronounced she determined to go to Quebec to petition the Governor-General, but everyone tried to dissuade her, and said that she ought to stay to give consolation to her husband, that appeal was useless, besides she might endanger the life of her infant, which must be left behind. There were barely two weeks, but she was firm against all opposition. Miss Chandler determined to go with her to beg for her father's life, in his case there would be ten children left fatherless. A subscription was taken up for Miss Chandler but none for Mrs. Wait as her friends opposed her going. "It was urged that a daughter pleading for the life of her father would be more likely to be successful than a wife for that of her husband. This was poor reasoning to me as I could not trust my husband's life to the pleadings of anyone but myself much less to those of an inexperienced girl of eighteen."

Before leaving, she begged the jail surgeon, Dr. Porter, that were she unsuccessful the body might not be given up for dissection but given to friends for burial. James Boulton and Judge Butler are both mentioned as also Capt. Richardson of the Transit, who gave Miss Chandler a free passage and four dollars. The next morning before leaving Toronto, Mrs. Wait went to see Jesse Ketchum, whom she had met when a girl, had breakfast there and joined him and his wife at family worship, before leaving this philanthropist gave her ten dollars to help her on her way. Capt. Moody treated the two distressed ladies with great kindness. Another steamer was taken at Kingston. Though she speaks of the beautiful scenery her mind was too distracted to enjoy it. Another steamer at Montreal for Sorelle, the residence of Sir John Colborne, whose son gave a letter to the aide-de-camp for the Governor-General at Quebec, but on reaching his residence they could not obtain an audience but were told a message would be sent to them. By the kindness of the captain they were allowed to remain on the boat at night, and at ten the next morning again went to the castle, but no decision had been reached. They begged for an answer that day as otherwise, Niagara could not be reached in time. A pathetic circumstance is the drive in the interval in a caleche

through the streets and to the battleground and the citadel to pass the time of suspense. On their return found there was still no answer, were told one would be sent to the boat before it sailed.

At this critical moment Miss Chandler was in tears and Mrs. Wait begged leave to sit there till a reply was given; if too late they would only arrive in time to embrace the lifeless bodies of those they loved. Col. Cooper the aide-de-camp finally went to intercede for them and returned with the news of a commutation of the sentence. Lord Durham could not give a free pardon till he had seen the documents but would give a letter to Sir George Arthur, the Lieut.-Governor.

On the return journey much kindness was received from a Mr. Simpson, M. P., as it was necessary to intercept Gov. Arthur, who was travelling, and inquiries were constantly made whether they had met or passed him. This gentleman contributed twenty dollars, one half of which she gave to Miss Chandler. At Cote de Lac, the steamboat was waiting for the arrival of Sir Geo. Arthur, and on his appearance next morning another trying interview took place as on the presentation of the despatch from Lord Durham he seemed annoyed, said he could not accede to the request. Mrs. Wait pleaded earnestly but she feared in vain, and afterwards sat down to write to Lord Durham telling him how his message had been received, honorably telling Gov. Arthur the next day of what she had done, who seemed angry and said "Before you send your letter to Lord Durham I wish to you understand that I have granted a respite." We may imagine with what feelings this was received, and she tells that only now, when the strain was over did she begin to think of her child, (she had been quite ill on the way from mental excitement and the great strain). One pleasing feature all through is her grateful mention of kindnesses received. Mr. Macaulay, the Secretary, had spoken kindly to her, and now on the boat Bishop Mountain, clad in his robes on the way to Toronto, was very kind.

Niagara was reached on the 22nd. She flew to the prison to convey the joyful tidings but found the respite had not arrived and as she had no papers to prove it had been granted, her news was hardly believed. The next day she went back to Toronto to inquire, and driving to the Chief Justice found he was not at home, then to the Solicitor General, Judge McLean, but met him on the way, by whom she was sent to Parliament, and met Mr. Sullivan, but no news of the respite had come. If it arrived she was told it would be sent next day on the Transit. In the interval she called on Bishop Mountain, who promised his help. She had only time to reach

the boat, and arriving at six in the evening, found she could not see her husband that night. On handing in his breakfast the next morning she tried to offer encouragement but at eleven the boat brought no good news and the long day dragged on till the arrival of the evening boat and still no message nor yet on the Transit the next day at eleven, the 25th, and the day appointed for the execution, but at noon the Sheriff, who had gone to Kingston with prisoners, arrived on a Government Steamer with the respite and the news was conveyed to the prisoners by the Rev. Thomas Creen, the rector, of St. Marks, at half past twelve.

After the overwhelming scene which ensued she hurried off to see her babe twenty miles away with its grandmother. It had been ill, but was brought next day on a pillow to Niagara. The mention of the Sheriff (Alexander Hamilton), recalls the story that the gruesome task he had been obliged to perform, so preyed on his mind that he died shortly after and the words of Wait have some bearing on this. "The execution of Morreau had made such an impression on his mind that he was glad of a respite and succeeded in gaining the Governor's boat to convey the news."

The next letter is from Wait himself who tells that on October 6th he was removed accompanied by the jailer, Wheeler, to Toronto, and thence to Kingston, escorted by soldiers, there they found many of their friends who had been prisoners in Niagara jail.

From this strong fort had escaped sixteen, by digging through a stone wall four feet thick and traversing underground rooms and an outside trench. Many came to see the scene of so daring an escape. The prisoners now used various devices to keep themselves well employed, reading, writing, making small boxes, portfolios, and Wait introduced the art of making a curiously wrought paper memorial inscribed in elegant style with names and short pithy mottoes which were eagerly sought after and often sent to friends. An association for literary improvement and amusement was formed, addresses given, etc. On Sabbath one of the prisoners, Rev. Wixon, a Baptist minister and the editor of a paper, who had lost one leg and walked with a crutch, gave commentaries on the Psalms. His crime was an article published in a newspaper.

On 4th November Mrs. Wait came with Miss Chandler bringing clothing and food, but after this toilsome journey in wintry weather, only five days of companionship were enjoyed for now an order came for twenty-three prisoners to be sent to Quebec.

An interesting circumstance is that their guards on the way, the Glengarry Militia, were visited by lady friends with fruit, vegetables, and other food, which they kindly shared with the prisoners; on the way they saw the smoking ruins of the houses of the habitants who had taken part in the rebellion. At Quebec they found that a remarkable escape from the Citadel had been made by Theller and Dodge. On the 22nd November, the prisoners were sent to England in a vessel loaded with timber, the room was dark and cold, they were treated as felons, in chains, lodged with the worst criminals. The Mersey was reached on Dec. 11th, and steps were taken at once by the prisoners to gain a hearing. They had determined to protest against all illegal treatment and Wait seems to have been made their spokesman. Many visitors showed kindness, particularly is mentioned Dr. Buck, the prison chaplain, who is spoken of as a Christian gentleman. Letters had been sent by Wait signed sometimes by the prisoners, sometimes by himself to Joseph Hume, Roebuck, Lord Brougham, Lord John Russell, Lord Durham, asking for redress, but apparently with little result.

A striking account is given of a frightful storm at sea when sent to Portsmouth, the vessel returned in five days, almost a total wreck, the shore was strewn with dead bodies from the numerous vessels lost. The commander of the vessel, Lieut. Pritchard, was most kind and reported the prisoners as "mostly men of property, respectability and family, intelligent, praying, moral men. I have frequently listened to their devotions before they retired to rest."

At length reaching Portsmouth, they were placed on a hulk for convicts and there met Sir P. Durham (Admiral) brother of Lord Durham, and Wait was presented as "the man whose life was saved by the unparalleled conduct of his wife, who made a journey of 700 miles to present personally her petition to Lord Durham." Here again on the York hulk the prisoners shewed their ingenuity in making boxes, horse-hair rings, paper tokens in the shape of hearts; these were shown on shore and Miss Strickland, the celebrated author of Queens of England, sent to them several sheets of colored paper to make for a Bazaar, with strict orders "to have the Day mentioned which increased the demand and we thus purchased an extra loaf of good bread."

All this time they were kept in ignorance of their fate but told they would not be sent out of England. In spite of this they were on the 17th March sent to Van Dieman's Land, a voyage of 16,000 miles, their hardships on the voyage were so great that three of the nine died soon after landing

and Wait only recovered after months in the hospital. He was sometime after assigned as clerk and storekeeper to a farm of 6,000 acres, also acted as teacher to five children for six months, and in 1841 was granted a ticket of leave from the efforts of his wife, who during all these weary years, had never ceased her exertions for his release. We have passed over very slightly the sufferings of the husband as this record is that of a wife's devotion, and that of her partner only as it affected her.

The letters of Mrs. Wait tell the rest of the story, sad indeed, but relieved by gleams of brightness, one from New York in Aug. 1839, tells that she had been in Lockport till May, two letters had reached her from Mr. Wait, as soon as she knew of his being sent as a convict to Van Dieman's Land she immediately left for Canada, resolved to obtain certificates and petitions and go to England. She met on this canal boat for Buffalo a warm hearted family from St. Thomas, named Wynen, who sympathized with her and raised \$30 to help. She then went to Haldimand and meeting the Hon. Wm. Hamilton Merritt, obtained from him letters and also a contribution of \$20; then went all through the Niagara District, being received kindly. The struggle of parting with her child is thus described. "Could I leave my child? I could not take her with me, and should I join my husband in his exile, my heart must yearn for my absent child. Could you my dear friend but imagine the heart rending effect of these sad reflections x x x I made it a subject of prayer to God by day and in the vigils of the midnight hour continued my supplications for guidance and direction, while pressing my dear babe to my breast. Thus nearly a week of dreadful anxiety passed while I continued my preparations, x x x then I prayed with a fervor I had scarce ever experienced when a calm and consoling resignation was diffused through the soul and I felt that the conflict was past and I could leave her without a struggle. My youngest brother brought from Dunnville a generous contribution, my aged father bid me farewell at Tonawanda, being a refugee from his home. I heard at Rochester of the release of nine of the prisoners in London, some thought from this that I need not go to England. I visited Mr. McKenzie in prison and at Syracuse I met the widows of Woodruff and Buckley, whose husbands were sacrificed at Kingston. At New York the talented Mr. Bidwell called on me, offering more than sympathetic words, benevolently opening his purse. The aid I have received from kind Americans is \$300, which with assistance from friends in Canada may come far short of what I require, my passage

will be \$75, which is \$25 "less than the usual sum."

The next letter is dated London, Dec. 30th, 1839, twenty-one days out, I first saw Mr. Ashurst and Mr. Walker, their agents, and then went to Lord Durham with letters from Mr. Merritt, which were sent by him to Lord John Russell with letters from Mr. Durand and others. I met with many kind Christian friends. Female prayermeetings were held to intercede for husbands and fathers in bondage. I personally saw Lord John Russell, who promised to present a petition to the Queen, this was ultimately presented by Lord Normanby. I met Mrs. Fry, the female Howard, of England, she is a friend of the Duchess of Sutherland. I think her the most majestic woman that I have ever seen. Lady Barham, a lady in waiting on the Queen, has most kindly laid the matter before her Majesty, who is to use Lady Barham's own language, "expressed herself as being much touched with the circumstances and was pleased to say she would consult her ministers on the subject, when should it be deemed practicable, she would be glad to listen to the application and grant the request though it is most difficult to act in these matters." Of the Queen, Lady Barham says "to know her is to love." I am advised to wait the course of affairs in Canada and so cannot go to Van Dieman's Land till a final answer is received, but to stay is very expensive, five dollars a week for board with any comfort, from the humidity of the climate.

The Queen is to be married in February, and there are hopes of a pardon then."

Letters are sent through friends to Sir John Franklin, the Governor of Van Dieman's Land with regard to Wait and Chandler. Application was made to the Queen on her marriage but there were so many similar appeals that this one was not granted. The Chartist are referred to as being sent to Van Dieman's Land also.

"I have besieged the government on every hand, had the best of influence which I think must eventually prevail, if otherwise I will endeavor to reach the land of their captivity and do something for them though I must leave my dear child and friends in America."

A letter is quoted from Lady Grey offering sympathy and help with letters to the isle of their imprisonment. Sir Edward Parry, a contemporary navigator with Sir John Franklin, is also pressed into the service. A kind letter from Charles Buller, Secretary to Lord Durham, is given. Mrs. Wait now becomes companion to a widow lady, Mrs. Ellis, with whom she is very comfortable. Lady Barham writes that nothing can be done at present for the prisoners, that "the Queen regrets

her inability to remove the cause of your distress." She then looks forward to a six months' voyage.

A letter to her brother in May, 1840, gives us two pictures of life in England—the beautiful country seats, and London in the May meetings of Christian and benevolent societies.

"The fields are rich with primroses, daisies, cowslips and buttercups. I have welcomed the delicate snowdrops, the crocus, the variegated polyanthus, the ever valued smile of the violet at a time when our fields are still lying under the pressure of snowbanks, indeed I have drunk in the beauties of this early spring with a degree of ecstasy."

Then follows a description of the church rates to be paid by all and the case of John Thorogood, a shoemaker, in jail eighteen months for non-compliance. In all her sadness she says "she has frequently laughed outright when on the scene of the marvellous adventure of the famous John Gilpin, particularly when on the road wherē he passed the sign of the Bell at Edmunton and Mrs. Gilpin waited her smoking dinner as so facetiously described by Cowper."

Her description of the meeting of the London Missionary meeting at Exeter Hall with seats for 6,000 and well filled is particularly interesting to us now after 76 years, and shows a well informed mind, keenly alive to the progress of the world, Sir George Grey, the son of the Lady Grey previously referred to, took the chair and opened with an eloquent address in which he spoke of the death of the Martyr, Rev. John Williams, at Erromanga, which recalls to us our own Canadian Martyrs on that Island fifty years later, the heroic Rev. Geo. Gordon and his wife and afterwards his brother, undeterred by the murder of his relatives by the natives on what has been well named "the martyr island." Missionaries from all parts of the world spoke, among them Robert Moffatt, the father-in-law of David Livingstone. Other meetings are spoken of, benevolent, scientific and religious. One of the world's great conventions on the Rights of man discussed the emancipation of the slave. Ladies were there from America, but were not allowed to speak, according to the rule which then governed these meetings, but some one spoke of the ungallant Englishman who would not give a hearing to this "Spartan band of women." At one meeting Prince Albert spoke and was cheered enthusiastically, was called by Sir Robert Peel "the right arm of the throne" and by Mrs. Wait is spoken of as "the youthful and amiable looking Prince." The Philanthropist Buxton, Archdeacon Wilberforce are also mentioned. The last meeting was presided over by the Duke of Sussex, it was packed and many were turned away. The French ambassa-

dor was present, Monsieur Guizot, and many American gentlemen and ladies, the Duchess of Sutherland, leaning on the arm of Mrs. Fry, the venerable Thomas Clarkson, who was listened to with respect, Judge Birney from America, Mary Howitt, Mrs. Opie, Daniel O'Connell. "I fancied I had heard eloquence before and I had heard eloquence in that hall from the lions of English oratory but this was eloquence that entranced the mind with its cadence and melody in strains too bewitching to resist and elicited enthusiastic cheering which transcends description." An American mulatto spoke with ability and pathos; all this was in the afternoon from two to five o'clock.

A visit is also spoken of to the Zoological Gardens, the Tower and other places, her remarks showing a cultured mind and a knowledge of history and literature.

The next letter is dated London, July 2nd, 1840, and tells that after deciding to go to Van Dieman's Land, she is advised by Buller to return to Canada instead, and petition Mr. Poulett Thompson, the Governor-General, and a letter of introduction is given her. Showing the versatility of this admirable woman we find that expecting to go to her husband and not knowing how she would support herself there she had entered the Home and Colonial Infant School Society, to learn their methods of instruction. After ten months in England, through the kindness of friends a passage was taken for her to America, and she promised her husband that should her hopes prove abortive she will with her child join him. "Cheer up" she says "rise superior to surrounding circumstances."

Again we find her on this side of the Atlantic still assiduously working for these unfortunate prisoners. In September 1840, she tells of writing to the Governor-General and not being satisfied with the verbal reply, conveyed by J. E. Small, writes again and receives a letter from Government House, Montreal, which only promises leniency and a ticket-of-leave. Receives a letter from W. H. Merritt, M.P., enclosing one from Sir John Franklin, in answer to appeals to him. It is somewhat strange to us to see in what varied lights the same person is spoken of by people in different circumstances. Sir John Franklin known to us as the naval commander and to whom such a pathetic interest attaches from his sad fate so long in doubt and the persistent efforts of Lady Franklin, appears here as the ruler of convicts in that distant island.

Her next visit was to Kingston to appeal to Parliament and the Governor-General in person. More than fifty members recommended her memorial among whom she mentions Sir Allan MacNab, and by the Governor she was kindly received.

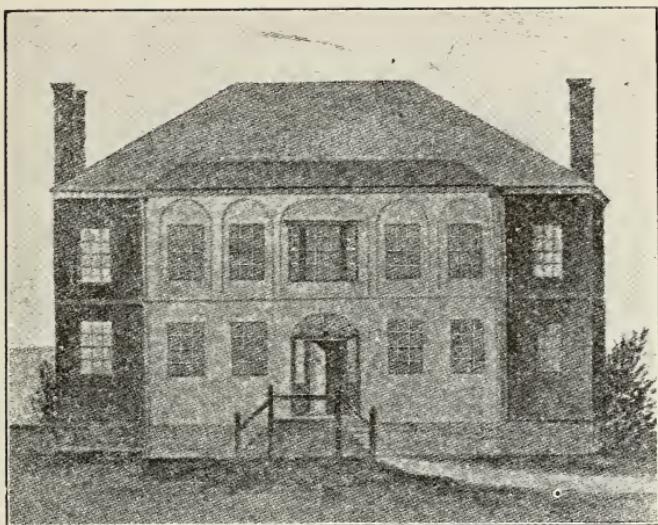
She then spent four weeks in the Niagara District ob-

taining signatures to a petition asking for a free pardon to all implicated in the rebellion and writes from Louth to Mr. Merritt saying she could have the signatures of nearly the whole province, mentions the good wishes of Mr. Thomson and Mr. Thorburn, both members of Parliament. Mr. Merritt replies that the House had addressed the Government and that the Home Government and the Queen are urged to consent to a pardon. In reference to the help by W. H. Merritt, M.P., Mrs. Wait calls him "the worthy and distinguished member of Parliament and her husband says "his kindness will be remembered with that deep sense of gratitude so eminently due."

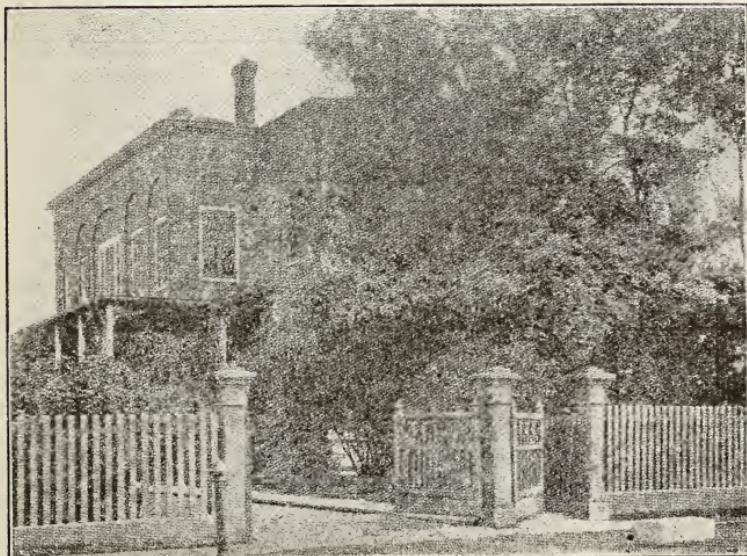
This closes the letters of this remarkable woman, as before the pardon was received, Mr. Wait had escaped and after some months met his wife in Buffalo, where she was teaching. Her exertions it is well to know were appreciated both by her husband and the other prisoners as he speaks of the "energetic conduct of my affectionate wife, notwithstanding the obstructions thrown in her way and the difficulties she encountered" "and Mr. Gemmel who had also escaped published a card attributing his freedom to the exertions of Mrs. Wait, showing that her labors were not for her husband, alone, but for his companions in suffering as well.

Since writing the above, from a letter received it is learned that Maria Wait was educated by Robert Randall, M.P.P., that she died shortly after the birth of twins in 1843, one of which survived, named Randall.

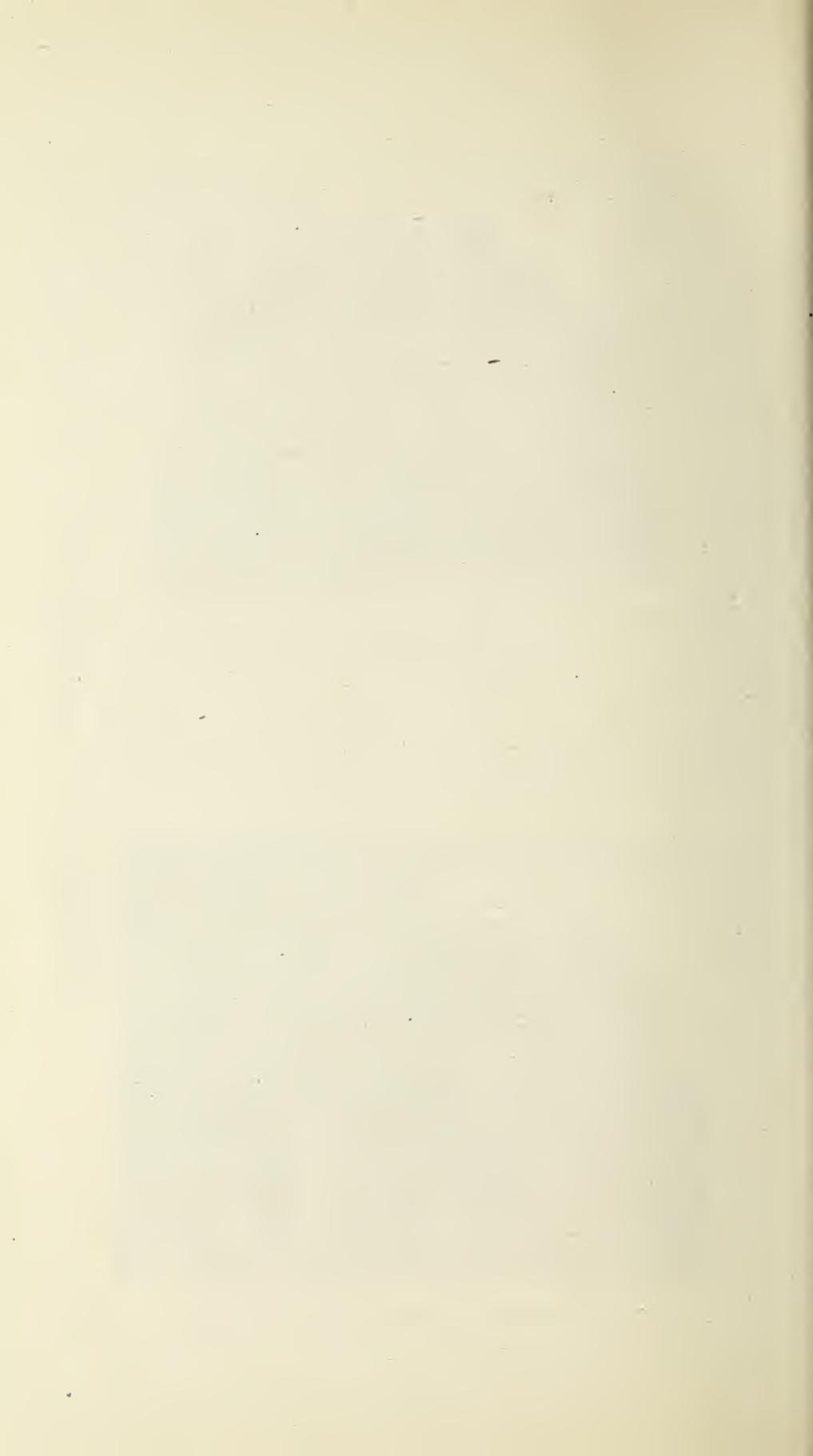
The infant, Augusta, was kept a great part of the time of the mother's absence by Mrs. Gonder at Chippawa, and the friends there who met to bid Mrs. Wait farewell saw her while they were watching from the shore wipe away the fast falling tears as the boat carried her from their sight. She is buried in Buffalo, but it is feared no stone marks the spot where rests the dust of this noble woman.



THE OLD GAOL AS IT WAS 60 YEARS AGO  
NOW THE WESTERN HOME



THE WESTERN HOME, AS IT IS TO-DAY



## AN HISTORIC HOUSE

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If the Niagara Court house and jail built in 1817 could tell only a part of what has been enacted within its walls what a tragic tale should we have. It has been said elsewhere by the present writer that to know the history of Niagara is to know much of the history of Upper Canada and in a lesser sense to know the history of this building is to know much of the history of our country.

An advertisement in the *Spectator* published in St. Davids in 1816, for brick, stone, lumber, lath, shingles, etc. for a jail and court house is signed by Ralfe Clench, Clerk, who we know was a United Empire Loyalist, a member of Butler's Rangers, a member of Parliament, a Judge, who had fought at Queenston Heights and whose name appears more frequently perhaps than that of any other in papers of that day. The first Court House and Jail in Niagara had been burned in 1813 and the next served the double purpose from 1817 to 1847, when the Court House was built in 1847 it was used as a Jail only till 1866 and from 1869 to the present time it has been the Western Home for waifs and strays from the crowded motherland and from its walls have gone out more than 4000 children to homes in our land.

In a letter in the *Niagara Gleaner* for March 26th, 1818, is a letter referring to the new gaol and Court House as a handsome building which must have cost a great sum of money and does credit to the builders and founders but he "cannot conceive why it was set in that swamp." Another letter is from the contractor Josiah Cushman acknowledging his satisfaction with the committee.

Here in 1819 was confined Robert Gourlay, a British subject banished as an alien by false oaths, his crime that of protesting in the newspapers of the day against the government of that period.

A graphic description of the scene is given in the opening chapter of Dent's history of the Rebellion in which are portrayed the Court Room, the lawyers, the Judge, the prisoner, commencing thus and much in the style of Macaulay's trial of Warren Hastings. "In the afternoon of a warm and sultry

day towards the close of one of the warmest and most sultry summers which Upper Canada has ever known an extraordinary trial took place at the court house in the old town of Niagara . . . . The date was Friday, the 20th of August, 1819. The court room, the largest in the province was packed to the doors, and though every window was thrown open the atmosphere was almost stifling."

Gourlay was so treated that his reason gave way. The chapter is named "The Banished Briton." The editor of the Niagara Spectator, Bartemus Ferguson, fared badly also, a letter of Gourlay's had appeared in his paper in his absence and without his knowledge and for this the unfortunate editor was confined in the Niagara jail, tried for sedition and sentenced to pay a fine of £50, to be imprisoned in jail for eighteen months, to stand in the public pillory one hour, to give security for seven years for the sum of £1000 and to remain in prison till the fine be paid and security given. We may surely congratulate ourselves that we do not live in these "good old days".

The newspapers of the day show how severe were the punishments, as in 1825 John Hight for Highway robbery was condemned to death. In 1826 three men were sentenced to be hanged for horse stealing and sheep stealing, on 25th October. This sentence was not carried out as the paper for Oct. 28th has an item headed "Great Disappointment. Great numbers came from U.S. into town to see the execution but His Excellency had suspended the sentence. A waggon load of cakes and gingerbread had to be sold at reduced rates". What a mingling of sad and gruesome elements does this extract give us. In 1831 is mentioned the Debtor's prayer written on the walls of the prison. In 1832 a letter in the Gleaner from a debtor in jail speaks of the kindness of Mrs. Stevenson and Mrs. Capt. Mosier in sending food and delicacies to debtors confined there, and in a Canadian home now after a lapse of seventy years may be seen a symbolic picture executed by one of these unhappy prisoners confined for debt, representing a bird in a cage fed by a little girl who is spoken of in the letter as the angel Mary. In the same letter the kindness of John Crooks, P.M., is spoken of in sending a load of wood in winter to allay the sufferings from the cold of a Canadian winter. Another pathetic story lately told me is that of a prisoner confined for debt for years; in those days the creditor was obliged to send weekly to the jailer a certain sum to provide food (meager enough we may be sure.) On the death of the prosecutor it was found that he had actually left in his will a sum that this payment might

be made and the unfortunate debtor still kept a prisoner. The executor, however unwilling to carry out this malignant desire from a grave, felt himself compelled to do so, till becoming ashamed at last thought of a way of escape for himself from this binding decree and escape for the prisoner as well. By the law the money had to be paid at a certain hour and it was so arranged one day that the messenger was detained a few minutes past the time and the jailer as the money was not forthcoming set the prisoner free, no doubt to the satisfaction of many sympathizers. This recalls a story in Old Man Savarin by E. W. Thompson, when a copper coin (many of which were not legal tender) afforded an excuse for a similar jail delivery.

In 1828 another victim complains in a letter in the Gleaner (Edward McBride a Parliamentary Candidate) that he was put in Jail for debt to keep him from being elected.

In the Gleaner of April 10th, 1832, a memorable meeting was held in this building in which we see the rumblings of the storm which culminated in the Rebellion of 1837 of which the imprisonment of Robert Gourlay and Bartemus Ferguson thirteen years before gave warning. The meeting was called by the Sheriff to discuss the affairs of the country. The accounts are very confusing, one meeting was held outside the building with Jas. Cooper as chairman, the other inside with Wm. Ball as chairman. Each party declared his the only legal meeting, both declared their loyalty to the King, William IV. Both passed an address with eleven resolutions, one declaring themselves satisfied with the administration, the other complaining of the grievances that existed, in the war losses not being paid, nor grants of land confirmed. Numerous contradictory letters appeared in the Gleaner telling of this exciting meeting.

The celebrated slave escape in 1837 gives perhaps the most dramatic event in connection with this building. At that time there were 300 or 400 colored inhabitants in Niagara, most of whom had escaped from slavery following the north star to liberty. Among them was a man called Moseby, who had escaped from Kentucky, using his master's horse for some distance. He was working on a farm near town when he was arrested and put in jail, having been followed by his master, a demand being made for his return to the United States as a felon for horse stealing, not as an escaped slave. It is said that baseless charges of this kind were often made to secure the return of the slave. The government was appealed to and Sir Francis Bond Head, then the governor, ordered that he be given up. Meanwhile great excitement

prevailed in town, the colored inhabitants collected in crowds, messages were sent to all the dusky race in the vicinity and several hundreds assembled watching the jail to see that the prisoner was not taken away. The white inhabitants sympathized with the prisoner and furnished provisions and other comforts for the beleaguered army. This was kept up for two weeks and finally a waggon was ready with constables and soldiers to take the prisoner to the wharf. The women in the crowd sang hymns, some were armed with stones in stockings, (a very effective weapon) one strong black woman seized one of the officials and held him prisoner. The riot act was read, the prisoner driven out, rails from a fence were stuck in the wheels to stop the progress, the prisoner, whose manacles it is said had been manipulated by friends in the jail jumped out and escaped. The order to fire was given and two black men were shot dead and others wounded. The leader was a teacher and exhorter, an educated mulatto named Herbert Holmes, the other named Green. Both were buried in the graveyard of the old Baptist church. An inquest was held and after seventeen hours the verdict of Homicide, but whether justifiable or not was not known. Some of the papers of the day headed the account Mobocracy in Niagara, others spoke of Holmes as a hero and his death as murder.

In many books of travel in Canada from 1820 to 1830 the jail and Court House is spoken of as the handsomest building in Upper Canada. The fine wood work in the interior may yet be admired. The present dormitory for the children was the court room, the spectator's gallery and the fine arches remain, but many changes have been made in the building as the condemned cells were taken down, and from the stone two culverts constructed in the town. In our Historical room may be seen the grating only about a foot square, from which a prisoner condemned to death might take almost his last sight of the light of day. The picture taken in 1860 is that of a building of unmitigated ugliness, very different in appearance from that of the present day with its beautiful trees and flowers as laid out by the good taste of Miss Rye, by whom it was purchased in 1869, it having been unoccupied for several years, when Niagara ceased to be the county town.

On July 31st, 1828, Jas. Morreau, who had taken part in the rebellion was hanged. A printed bill in the possession of the Society offers a reward for his arrest. Thirteen other persons were condemned to be executed on 25th August. Ten were reprieved and the wife of Benjamin Wait and the daughter of Chandler took the long journey to Quebec to beg

the lives of the husband and father. After many difficulties and discouragements Mrs. Wait returned with the promise of a reprieve which however did not arrive till half an hour before the time fixed for the execution. The excitement of such a dramatic scene may be imagined. Another memorable execution was that of Seely in 1836 who died protesting his innocence of the murder attributed to him. Many years afterwards the real murderer on his deathbed confessed his guilt, thus confirming the statement of Seely.

In this building the congregation of St. Mark's church worshipped in 1843 while the transept, the new part of the church was being erected.

Among the last prisoners were some of those taken in the Fenian Raid, lodged here before being transferred elsewhere.

It is rather remarkable that the advertisement for materials for the first jail and Court House in Niagara in 1795 is signed by Relfe Clench, the same as in that of 1816. The jail was situated on the corner of King and Prideaux street. We read that in the war of 1812 there were confined in the jail at one time 300, many of them political offenders. It was burned during the bombardment previous to the conflagration in Dec. 1813. Many other remarkable events might be narrated which transpired in this building but these may be left for other explorers of historic lore. J. C.

## NAMES ONLY

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This may seem to some to be a trivial subject but it is indeed very interesting and involves some knowledge of the town and throws light on some of its forgotten pages. The town was laid out in 1791 by D. W. Smith, Deputy Surveyor General the son of Major Smith of the 5th Regt., laid out with mathematical regularity, wide streets, not all, however, of the same width. The first survey extended only to King street, a river front of 800 yards, but as we learn from a meeting of the Land Board in 1791, this was extended in the direction of Navy Hall. In the map of 1791 the property of D. W. Smith is shown; on the four acres now called the Market Square was his fine house referred to in our No. 11. In 1816 the boundaries were extended, and in 1822 a map was made by Capt. Vavasour, R.E., taking in the common to Fort George, and in the map of David Thompson, 1845, are included the map of Vavasour and that of the Harbor and Dock Company of 1831. In the letter of Jno. Small, 1795, the names of owners of lots in the town are given from No.1 to No. 412, the same as numbers used now. In Vavasour's map the new part is numbered again from 1 to 46, and in the Harbour and Dock Company's numbered from 1 to 21. In the map of Chas. L. Hall, barrister, about 1830, the numbers are the same as in that of 1795. The fact that the town at first extended only to King Street explains the reason why to the continuation of the streets south a different name is given. Thus Queen Street, south of King, is Picton Street. No doubt the chief street of the town was named from Queen Charlotte, the wife of George III., and its continuation, Picton St., from the heroic general who fell at the battle of Waterloo, the streets east and west of Queen are respectively called Johnston and Prideaux, from the two commanders who conducted the siege of Fort Niagara in 1759. General Prideaux was killed by the bursting of a shell and was buried in the chapel as told by Sir William Johnston in his diary. "He was buried with great form. I was the chief mourner." There has been much discussion lately as to the site of the grave and whether there should not be a stone to mark the spot where lies a British General who gave

his life for Britain's glory. The continuation of Prideaux Street is Byron Street, the poet as he just at this time "awoke one morning and found himself famous." Johnston Street, south of King, is called Platoff Street, from the Russian General, who defeated Napoleon. Gage Street, next to Johnston, is named from General Gage, Governor of Montreal, in 1760. In 1774 he was governor of Massachusetts, at that time a very difficult position. On the south of King Street it is named Castlereagh from the British statesman, whose fate was so tragic. The remaining streets to the west are simply Centre, William, Mary, John and Anne, whether from William III and his Queen Mary and her sister Anne or for some local magnates in the town or simply for no reason, a dearth of ideas, John, though so common a name, has never been a popular name for a king of England. We turn now to the streets at right angles commencing with King street, the origin of which need not be questioned, it is now often called Broadway. The next Regent, was probably named from the Prince Regent, afterwards George IV., but there is a tradition that it had a more plebeian origin; a fashionable tailor on this street advertised that he was from Regent Street, London, and articles bought there were said to be from Regent Street and that name was gradually given. It seemed puzzling how the next street could be called Victoria, as when these streets were named, Victoria was not born. As the Princess Charlotte, of Wales, died in 1817, Victoria born in 1819, was heiress to the crown but an explanation has lately suggested itself. It is found that in early maps the streets north of King are simply called 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th streets, and at a later date part of them were renamed. The next, Gate street, is so far an unsolved mystery, Simcoe Street bears a name worthy of remembrance, that of the first governor of Upper Canada, who lived here a part of five years, his hospitality shewn by his Indian name, Deyonguhokrawen "one whose door is always open," a lake, a county, a town all bear his name. Mississagua Street is the only Indian name preserved in our streets, running out to Mississagua Point where the lighthouse stood near the spot now occupied by the tower built of the bricks from the ruins of the town styled by our poet "a stern memorial of a deed unchivalrous", Our street namers seem now to have exhausted their ideas as the remainder of the streets to the north are sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth streets.

South of King street nearly all the names are military given shortly after that Titanic struggle of Britain with so many foes. That was surely still more than of late a condition

of "splendid isolation". The next street to King has however the name of a Scientist, from Sir Humphrey Davy who had in 1819 invented the safety lamp. Next comes Wellington Street, recalling the Iron Duke of whom Tennyson said "Truth lover was our English Duke, whatever record leap to light. He never shall be shamed." The next Alava, from a Spanish general who served on the staff of Wellington. Nelson Street recalls the great Sea Admiral who won victory after victory and finally saved England from the threatened invasion of Napoleon by destroying the combined fleets of France and Spain. It is fitting that the next street should be called Collingwood, the friend of Nelson, who followed him step by step up the ladder of promotion and on the death of Nelson assumed the command and completed the victory. Another military commander gives his name to the next, Blucher Street, reminding us of that long loud Sabbath day of Waterloo when Wellington standing firm resisting charge after charge finally wished for "night or Blucher" but before the arrival of either knew the day was won and the "Old Guard of France" had failed to make any impression on that "front of steel," why the name Lichen was given to the last street we know not, except that here one of the numerous springs found on the bank causes moss and lichen in abundance. Another name Trivene is given on one map.

There still remains the land given to the Harbour and Dock Company in 1831. Part of this was marshy and the earth from the excavation for the "slip" was used to fill up the low land, the exhalations from which no doubt helped to cause the fever and ague of which early visitors speak so much. It is easy to see why the boundary was called Front Street; where now stands the Queen's Royal Hotel was the Engineers' Quarters, the continuation of the street, Ricardo is named from neither a military nor naval hero, nor yet from a royal personage or a great statesman, but from David Ricardo who wrote on Political Economy and Taxation in 1817.

The chief officials of the Harbour and Dock Company were honored by the streets of their domain being named after them. Delatre, from the President, Col. Delatre, whose tragic death on the Toronto steamer is recorded in papers of that day, 1848. Col. Delatre had belonged to the Ceylon Regiment in 1818, and lived at Lundy's Lane in 1832, and in Niagara over a year. His house, Delatre Lodge, is now owned by Mr. E. B. Hostetter. He was a student of the classics as well as of science. This street is often called Spring Street, the reason being obvious. The Secretary of the company, Jas. Lockhart, afterwards a noted merchant of the

town as well as a banker and ship owner, gives his name to the next street, and a cross street is called Melville from Captain Melville, the chief proprietor, who is spoken of in 1837 by Mrs. Jameson in her "Summer Rambles and Winter Studies" as a public spirited good-natured gentleman. Ball Street also a cross street, is named from George Ball, a large stockholder, who came from the Mohawk valley in 1784.

The names in the County of Lincoln will suggest new lines of thought, when Simcoe came as Governor in 1792 a division was made of nineteen Counties in Upper Canada instead of the forty six at present in Ontario. These were nearly all named from counties in England and the townships from the towns and villages in the respective Counties, Lincoln included the Niagara peninsula and extended as far as the present County of Norfolk. The names of townships, Cais-  
tor, Clinton, Grantham, Gainsborough, Grimsby, Louth, Ancaster, Barton, Glanford, Crowland, Humberstone, Wain-  
fleet, Stamford, etc., are all from towns or villages in Lincolnshire, England. The names since given to our towns and vil-  
lages give us some hint of the chief men of the time, being either military or political officials, or some village magnate's name is preserved. Newark was named by Simcoe from a town in Lincolnshire, Queenston it is thought from the Queen or the Queen's Rangers stationed there, Governor Simcoe had been the colonel of another regiment of Queen's Rangers in the Revolutionary War. The Hon. Robert Hamilton or Judge Hamilton, the Lieutenant of the County and the chief man of the district, supplies a name to two cities, Hamilton from George Hamilton his son, and St. Catharines from Catharine Askin, his first wife. It is true that Page's Atlas credits the name to Catharine Butler, the wife of Colonel Butler, although on another page he names Catharine Hamilton, and some have asserted it was from Catharine, the wife of Hon. Wm. Hamilton Merritt, but it is shown conclusively that it was named St. Catharines in the first survey, 1809, and the fact that the same Judge Hamilton who owned 500 acres where St. Catharines now stands, gave a grant of two acres for a church in 1798 gives consistency to the statement. It was first called the "Twelve" and Shipman's Corners from Paul Shipman, who kept a tavern, and to whom also St. Paul Street owes its name. Port Dalhousie was named from Lord Dalhousie, who gave great encouragement to the Welland Canal project. Thorold takes its name from Sir John Thorold, who was the member for Lincolnshire in England then. It was at first called Stumptown, the heavy forest just cleared away having left such evidences, but a proposal was made to call it St. George

from George Keefer, who is entitled to be called its founder. It is right and fitting that the name Merritt should be preserved as it is in Merritton, in sight of that great feat of engineering skill, the Welland canal, projected by the Hon. Wm. Hamilton Merritt. The villages Homer and Virgil owe their classic names to we know not what freak. The first was called the "Ten" from the Ten Mile Creek. Virgil has had several names, the "Four Mile Creek, the Cross Roads, then Lawrenceville from a good old Methodist Class Leader who lived there during the war of 1812, Jordan was the Twenty and Grimsby the Forty, the entrance of those creeks into Lake Ontario being supposed to be that number of miles from Niagara. Drummondville is now called Niagara Falls South, a change much to be regretted as the name of General Drummond who fought so bravely at Lundy's Lane, Fort Erie and elsewhere should certainly be commemorated. However, the church standing on the site of the battle of Lundy's Lane is called Drummond Hill Church. It is much to be regretted that so few Indian names have been preserved, as except Niagara, Chippawa and Erie there is no trace of the musical and sonorous Indian language. The name Niagara has forty different spellings in the Documentary History of New York, Ongiara, Ouniagarah brings up Goldsmith's line "And Niagara stuns with thundering sound". It was first West Niagara to distinguish it from Fort Niagara on the east side of the river then Nassau, Butlersburg, Newark, when Simcoe removed the capital to York the people of the town quite indignant, obtained an act of Parliament in 1798 to change it back to Niagara and now many say Niagara-on-the-Lake to distinguish it from Niagara Falls, Niagara Falls South, Niagara Falls Centre, Niagara Falls City, N.Y., making confusion worse confounded.

Dundas is named from Lord Dundas, the Secretary of State in Simcoe's time, Port Colborne from the stern military governor during the Rebellion. Port Robinson was first called Port Beverley from the Chief Justice John Beverley Robinson, and Allanburg from, it is probable, Sir Allan McNabb, St. Davids, at first called Davidsville from Major David Secord whose houses there were burned in 1814, Beamsville from Jacob Beam one of the earliest settlers and who gave the land for the Baptist church. Smithville from Smith Griffin, who came in 1787 and was the first merchant in Smithville, Stamford was first called Mount Dorchester from Lord Dorchester, sometimes Township No. 2 as Newark was Township No. 1. This enumeration might be still more extended, but may at least show that there is something after all in a name. J. C.

## ST. VINCENT DE PAUL'S CHURCH

(By *Mrs. Joseph Greene*)

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The history of the Catholic Church in the Niagara Peninsula began many years before the erection of the present edifice known as St. Vincent de Paul's Church (it was the first Catholic Church erected on the Niagara Peninsula) and to record that history, in a manner which would do it justice, even in a moderate degree, would require the pen of one infinitely more gifted than the writer, for there is a wealth of historic lore, both civil and religious, surrounding this charming and picturesque old town of Niagara. Its religious history may be said to date from the year 1626, when Father Daillon made his way to the Niagara Peninsula with a view of evangelizing the "Neutrals," which tribe claimed the peninsula as its own. Few pens can adequately portray the apparently insurmountable difficulties which the early pioneer priests of western Canada had to encounter and overcome, the incalculable dangers and obstacles which were continuously besetting them as they journeyed through dense and desolate forests, across fallen timbers and swollen streams with nothing to guide them other than a 'blaze' which intimated to the weary traveler that a settlement lay beyond. Nevertheless, we invariably find, that no difficulties daunted them nor did disappointments nor rebuffs discourage them, and, as a result of this untiring zeal, we are now, in our comfortable churches, reaping the fruits of their almost superhuman exertions.

As previously stated, Father Daillon bent his energies to the lofty task of sowing the seeds of christianity among those Godless savages, but with poor success, in fact they would have meted out to him a terrible death but for the intervention of their Chief, Soharrisen.

About 1636 Father Brebeuf, that heroic missionary and martyr, visited the same tribe, living on the same food as they used, sleeping in their wigwams, continually exposed to torture and death by an unreliable and merciless foe, risking everything in the hope of saving some immortal souls.

It is not my intention, however, to again rehearse the well known historic facts concerning the horrible tortures and oft times martyrdoms, which the early Catholic Priests received at the hands of those savages, while endeavoring to spread among them the light of Christianity.

In 1669 Father Galinee with two companions passed through Niagara on his way to the West. This illustrious Sulpician priest has furnished us with much valuable narrative concerning his missionary labors during his explorations of the great lakes. As far as can be ascertained no other missionary visited Niagara until 1678, when Father Hennepin, a Franciscan missionary of historic fame, offered up mass on the banks of the Niagara River. We are also indebted to this intrepid missionary for the first intelligent description of that sublime wonder of nature, the Falls of Niagara.

We are informed by Father Charlevoix, the Jesuit historian, that he said mass at Fort Niagara in 1721 on his way to the Mississippi, and there is a record of a Recollect, Father Grespel, as having been Chaplain at the Fort in 1733. Father Picquett, a Sulpician, in 1751 travelled over the Niagara Peninsula, instructing and converting the natives and instilling renewed ardor and faith into the converts of earlier days, and according to his own account, he also said mass at the Chapel at Fort Niagara; and Sir Wm. Johnson tells that two British officers were buried under the Chapel in 1759, but no trace of it remains.

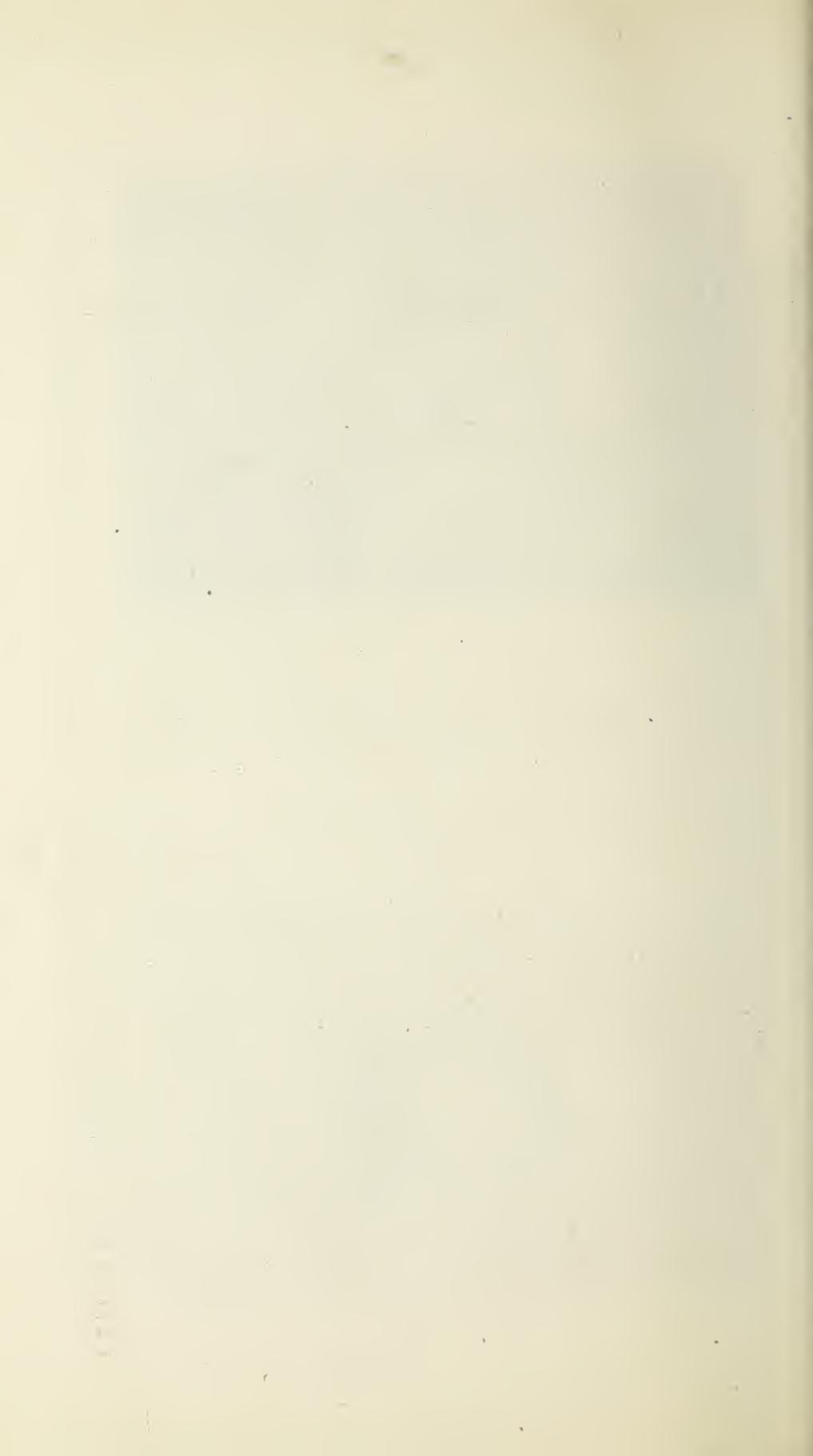
In 1794 Father Edmund Burke, an Irish Priest, of the diocese of Quebec, believing that there was pressing need for a missionary priest in the Western part of the Province, sought and obtained permission to embark on that laudable undertaking. He came from Quebec to Niagara and in addition to his labors among the Indians acted as Chaplain to the Catholic soldiers who were stationed here at the time. Having been held in high repute by the officials of the Government, he secured grants of land from Governor Simcoe in different parts of Canada, one being in this vicinity on which he proposed erecting a monastery for the education of priests for the Western Mission, and in order to further this object he again journeyed to Quebec, but returned here in 1798. He eventually left here in 1800 on account of ill health. For one who had been a Professor in the University of Paris and surrounded with all the culture and refinement incidental to such a position, it must have been extremely repugnant to reconcile himself to his savage surroundings and apply himself to the uninteresting task of mastering the Indian tongue. He was consecrated Bishop of Halifax in 1818. He was an intimate friend



REV. FATHER LYNCH



REV. FATHER GORDON



of the Duke of Kent and was known and admired by all the Military and Naval Officers who commanded in British America at the time. He was of commanding appearance, of a cheerful and engaging manner and Great Britain had no more loyal subject than the Right Rev. Edmund Burke.

In 1802 Father Des Jardins succeeded Father Burke as Chaplain to the soldiers, but he remained only a short time and left no parish records. This information appears in an article written by the late D. A. O'Sullivan and published in the Toronto Jubilee volume, 1892.

In 1816 a few Catholic families resided in Niagara and along the banks of the Niagara River, who were visited at intervals by Priests from Glengarry and other points.

These conditions continued until 1826 when Father James Campion was placed in charge of the mission here by Bishop Macdonell who had been chosen Vicar Apostolic of Upper Canada by Pius VII in 1819 and was made titular Bishop in 1820. A short sketch of Bishop Macdonell may not be found uninteresting. He was born 17th July, 1762 in Inverness-shire, Scotland, and educated in the Scotch College of Paris and Valledolid in Spain. He was ordained on the 16th Feb., 1787, and spent five years in Scotland. He accompanied the Highland Regiment of Glengarry Fencibles, who were all Catholics, to Ireland in 1798, having been appointed their Chaplain. When the regiment was disbanded four years later, Father Macdonell, embarked for Canada in 1803, having previously secured a grant of land for every officer and soldier who wished to accompany him to Canada and I may add he was accompanied by the greater part of his men. When they arrived here Lieut.-Governor Hunter endorsed their patents of land and they settled in Glengarry.

When Father Macdonell came to this country in 1803 there were only three Catholic Churches in the whole Province, through his perseverance and energy he succeeded in having thirty-five built during his thirty years of unceasing labor. There were also twenty-two priests throughout the different parts of the Province, most of whom were educated at his expense. He was created first Bishop of Kingston in 1826. It was a favorite saying of his "that every man of his name should be either a priest or a soldier." Apropos of this, at the breaking out of the war of 1812, among the first to take up arms in defence of his country was Lieut.-Colonel John Macdonell, who was Attorney-General for Upper Canada, being only 24 years of age. General Brock appointed him his Provincial Aide-de-camp and at the battle of Queenston Heights, when the heroic Brock fell mortally wounded, Colonel

Macdonell assumed command, but while leading his men up the heights, he also fell.

Those two great men were buried in the same spot at Fort George, where the bodies lay for twelve years. Their remains now rest in the sarcophagus in a monument second to none in America, erected on Queenston Heights by a grateful Canadian people. The following is a quotation from a letter, written by one of the Militia who took part in the battle dated 14th Oct. 1812.

"This heroic young man, the constant attendant of the General, strove to support to the last a cause never to be despaired of, because it involved the salvation of the Country." Lieut.-Colonel Macdonell was a practical Catholic, as evidenced, by his approaching the sacrament before leaving for the frontier.

When Father Campion had this mission assigned to him in 1826 there were only three priests to look after the needs of the Catholics scattered over 225 miles of territory between Detroit and Niagara and the whole north-western part of Ontario, viz Fathers Fluet, Crevier and Campion. Father Campion had also to attend Dundas once a month, which is about 50 miles distant from here, and London and St. Thomas twice a year. When this good priest's presence was required at a death bed he had not infrequently to travel over one or even two hundred miles, and when one remembers that the greater part of the land at that times was a dismal wilderness, with but an occasional settlement, one can in a slight degree appreciate the hardships Father Campion had to encounter. At the present writing we have residing among us an old lady (Mrs. Paynter, born in 1819, whose recollections of the pioneer days are very entertaining. She remembers Father Campion very well, he having frequently visited her father's house (Simon Walsh) where he was always a welcome guest. Patrick McArdle and John Harris also took an active interest in the welfare of the mission and were the first to greet Father Campion on his arrival here. Patrick McArdle came to Niagara in 1816. He was an Irishman and a staunch Catholic, John Harris was an Englishman, his ancestors having settled in England shortly after the Norman Conquest. He came to Niagara in 1818.

The first entry in the old Niagara Register in the hand writing of Father Campion, reads as follows—The first day of June, by me Roman Catholic Missionary for Niagara, Dundas, etc., has been baptised Mary Ann Hughes, born on

the 2nd day of January, 1827, of the lawful marriage of James Hughes and Mary May."

Jas. W. Campion,  
M. Pt.

Here is another entry in the old Register—"The 12th August, 1827—By the Right Rev. Alex Macdonell has been baptized Mary Harris, born the 11th July, 1827, of the lawful marriage of John Harris and Margaret Grey, who is not a Roman Catholic, the sponsors being Patrick McArdle and Mary Fegan, also McArdle, R. Ep"

The following is an extract from the same register of a marriage, which shows how careful and conscientious the early Catholic Priests were to guard the sanctity of the marriage tie. "The 8th day of October, 1827—Cornelius Calahan and Mary Carroll both from Ireland, having solemnly declared and given a certificate of their not being married or contracted before with any person, and not being able to discover any impediment to prevent them from getting married, I, the undersigned Roman Catholic Missionary for Niagara, Dundas, etc., etc., have received their mutual consent of marriage and have given the benediction according to the rules of the Holy Roman Catholic church in presence of Patrick Cullen, Patrick Handy, Andrew Boylan, Patrick Flynn and Mary Kelley."

Jas. W. Campion,  
M. Pt.

Father Campion remained in charge of the Niagara Mission until 1830, when he was recalled by Bishop Macdonell to Kingston to act in the capacity of his Secretary. He died in 1841.

At the date Father Campion was removed, the Catholics had no church, no church property of any kind, not excepting a graveyard, and their dead were buried in St. Mark's Episcopal Cemetery. Services were held at one time in a hall over the brick store on Queen St. now occupied by Mr. Doyle, at another time, in the house now owned and occupied by Miss Catholine. At that period it was one large room but was apparently of sufficient capacity to embrace the congregation that gathered there to be present at the celebration of the Mass.

Services were also occasionally held in the brick cottage, which is part of the Western Home estate. It was occupied by Mrs. Stevenson, a zealous Catholic lady, who with her daughters, promoted the interests of religion materially by teaching Sunday School and instructing the children in the

knowledge of their belief. Mrs. Richards of Pembroke (nee Allinson) is her granddaughter. No record can be found as to the number of Catholics in Niagara in 1830 when Father Campion was removed, but as near as can be ascertained, there were about three dozen families represented at the services, exclusive of soldiers. Father Campion recorded 64 Baptisms, 6 professions of faith 17 marriages and 6 burials during his pastorate of three years, some of the children baptized however were brought here from New York State.

The priest appointed to succeed Father Campion was Father Cullen, who, noting the great need the Catholics had for a church here, and concluding there was a sufficient number to warrant the undertaking, he therefore on the 3rd of April, 1831, called a meeting whereat it was resolved to open a subscription list for the purpose of erecting a church. The following is a copy of the minutes of said meeting.

#### NIAGARA.

"At a meeting of the Catholic inhabitants of Niagara held on Easter Sunday, the 3rd day of April, 1831, Daniel McDougal, Esquire, was called to the chair and George Macan was requested to act as secretary, after which the following resolutions were unanimously agreed on.

1st Resolution—That the Glory of God, the honor of religion and the wants of the Catholics of this place require that a Catholic church be erected in this town.

2nd Resolution—That the Rev. John Cullin, our pastor, Daniel McDougal and George Macan are hereby nominated and appointed to procure the subscription of every well disposed person, who is willing to contribute towards the erecting of a Catholic Church in Niagara.

3rd Resolution—That John Harris, H. McNally, J. B. Cootby and Andrew Boylan are hereby appointed collectors of subscriptions for the Catholic Church of Niagara.

4th Resolution—That Daniel McDougal is hereby nominated Treasurer, and George Macan, Secretary, to the Roman Catholics of Niagara, and the collectors above named in the 3rd resolution are required to pay in the monies collected by them to the treasurer and he is to give his receipt for the different sums received, which receipts the said collectors are to place in the hands of the secretary immediately after obtaining said receipts.

5th Resolution—That it is expedient to form a committee of management consisting of five of the resident inhabitants of this place, any three of whom will form a quorum, who shall manage, superintend and transact all the temporal

affairs appertaining or in any wise belonging towards the erecting of said church, and the Rev. J. Cullen (or the resident priest being incumbent of this place) Daniel McDougal, Geo. Macan, John Harris and Michael Morley be and are hereby constituted and appointed to be the said committee of management.

6th Resolution—That the treasurer give an accurate account of the monies or other funds put into his hands at every meeting of the committee of management, if required to do so by them, and that the secretary give a statement of the affairs of the church on the Easter Monday of every succeeding year at a general meeting of subscribers to be called together in the church on that day and that the treasurer is hereby prohibited from paying out any of the funds of the church without a written order from the secretary, counter-signed by two others of the committee of management.

7th Resolution—That the persons now nominated and accepting office are required to hold the same for one year only, but are eligible to be re-elected as often as is expedient and that the said committee of management have power to fill up any vacancies in their number which may happen by death or change of residence during their year in office.

8th Resolution—That the thanks of the Catholic inhabitants of this place are due and hereby given to our worthy pastor, the Rev. J. Cullen, for his laudable exertion in commencing the subscription of this morning for the purpose of erecting said church."

The following year viz. 1832, the church was begun; Bishop Macdonell, who was conspicuous not only in the ecclesiastical, but also the political life of the country, having secured a grant of four acres of land from the government on which it was erected. It is a frame building measuring 60 x 40 ft., with ten large Gothic windows of stained glass and a commodious sanctuary and vestry. There is also a tower with a large window surmounted by a steeple 50 ft. high and a cross. The interior arrangements of the edifice consist of three aisles with two central and two side rows of pews. There are two galleries, the cost of those having been entirely assumed by the Catholic soldiers, who were stationed here at the time, and for whom one of the galleries was reserved. There are three altars daintily finished in white and gold. Those are not the original altars, they having been discarded at the time the church was repaired. The altar of the Blessed Virgin Mary to the left of the main altar was a gift from the Barron family, and St. Joseph's Altar to the right of the main altar was presented by Mrs. Newton, daughter of Col. McDougal,

mentioned as having been President of the first meeting held in 1831.

The church was completed in 1834, and Bishop MacDonell, on the 9th of Nov. of that year, came over to Niagara and blessed it, giving it the name of "St. Vincent de Paul", and celebrated the first mass therein. There is an entry in the register that the first communicants were "Miss Dixon and Mrs. Duff."

At the rear of the church is the cemetery in which at least two headstones are still standing with the year 1832 legible, but the names are undecipherable.

Father Polin succeeded Father Cullen, but remained only a short time. During his tenure of office here he records ten baptisms and one marriage, one baptism having been performed in "Gravelly Bay", now Port Colborne, thirty miles from here.

Father Edward Gordon succeeded Father Polin in 1834 and completed the erection of the church and at once took the necessary steps for the erection of a Presbytery. A meeting was called and a subscription list opened in 1835. One Lieut. Coleman of the 15th regiment was appointed to collect among the soldiers here and in Toronto. He also appears to have collected from a number of the prominent Protestant citizens and business people of the town and of Toronto. Here are a few of the names that appear on his list: "Mrs. Lyons, Messrs. Stocking & Grier, Robert Dickson, E. C. Campbell, James Lockhart, W. B. Winterbottom, etc., belonging to the town. On the Toronto list some of the names are: the Hon. Mr. Elmsley, Capt. Coleman, Hugh Dougherty, J. Shaughnessy, etc. The Presbytery or "Glebe House," according to the records cost £253 14s 11 1-2d but the amount collected up to the year 1840 was only £50, and Father Gordon then paid the balance due from his own private funds.

On the 13th Sept., 1834, Bishop Gaulin, coadjutor of Bishop MacDonell, administered the sacrament of Confirmation, this being the first time it was administered in the mission east of Sandwich. There were five males and six females confirmed at that time, ranging in ages from 13 to 23 years.

Beginning with the pastorate of Father Gordon the Niagara Mission appears to have flourished. Some of the more distant places were detached from the mission viz. Dundas, St. Thomas, and London but the pastor had still a large circuit to traverse viz Niagara Falls, Port Colborne, St. Johns, Smithville, St. Catharines, Toronto Gore and Adjala.

At a meeting held at the chapel on the 20th of April,

1835, (Easter Monday) the office of Church Warden was established, and Messrs. Hugh McNally and William Harris were appointed for that year, at the same meeting Mr. John Lyons was appointed to act as secretary and treasurer during the same term and Rev. Edward Gordon, Messrs. John Harris, and Thos. Heenan were appointed collectors of subscriptions for the finishing of the church and Mr. Farrell was appointed to collect "for the country" Father Gordon left a record of the total Catholic population for a thousand square miles viz. 817 souls.

The first entry in the Baptismal Register by Father Gordon was made on the 27th April, 1834, as follows: "April 27th was baptized by me the, undersigned priest, John, aged four weeks, son of William Kay and Elizabeth Shean. Sponsors, Edward McCann and Margaret O'Connor.

Signed,

Edward Gordon,  
M. Pt.

Father Gordon kept a very careful record of the baptisms, confirmations, marriages, professions of faith and burials, with occasional explanatory notes. For instance, opposite the entry of the baptism of James Morreau the following note appears: "This man was sentenced to death for participating in the rebellion. He led the insurgents at the "Short Hills". He was 23 years of age and was received into the church in jail, 29th July, and was executed 30th July, 1838."

Among the burials of 1843 is an entry of a young priest, 26 years old, who died suddenly at the Falls while visiting relatives there, and is buried under the main altar of the church here, at the funeral were "Rev. Mr. Mullen, Mr. Charest and Mr. McIntosh.

In the old register, Father Harold discovered a petition from the congregation of St. Vincent de Paul Church, Niagara, asking Bishop Power to give the "necessary power and instructions to have the stations of the cross erected in order that we and all who are disposed may have an opportunity of receiving the many spiritual advantages to be obtained by devout prayer and meditation on Christ's passion" and your Petitioners as in duty will ever pray, etc."

Signed,

John McHenry, David Langan, Mich. McGuire, Ed. Gordon,  
Pt. for the rest of the congregation."

The document bears the date '9th Dec., 1844,' and is written on a full sheet of foolscap. The petition is on one side, the reply, granting the petition on page 2, a declaration by the pastor, that he has this day erected, etc., in the presence

of the "undersigned witnesses" no names are inscribed, however, and on page 4 is the Bishop's name in full, with the words "favored by Rev. M. P. McDonough" in one corner. The Bishop's letter, sealed with red wax, is countersigned by J. J. Hay, Sec., and recites that he has authority from a decree of Gregory XIII to delegate any priest to erect the "Via Crucis" and hereby delegates etc." The letter is given at Toronto, 13th Dec., 1844.

The priest's declaration shows that the Stations were erected on the 5th February, Ash Wednesday. A copy of this declaration also exists in the archives, made out by Father Gordon, in obedience to the Bishop's orders to do so.

In 1844 Father Gordon called a meeting of the Catholic congregation in order to raise funds for the liquidation of the debt incurred for the painting, plastering, etc., of the Catholic Church. At that meeting it was unanimously agreed that each man would pay the sum of two shillings and sixpence. Among the names on the list who paid the sum stipulated appear the following:—Alex. Lane, Hugh McNally, Daniel McDougal, Patrick Lawless, Mrs. Carpenter, Michael Morley, Mrs. Mary Stevenson, Thomas Daly, Richard Ryan, Nicholas Wall, Patrick Maddigan, Michael Maguire, Margaret Healey, Mrs. Hewitt, Mrs. Hall, Martin Kearns William Walsh, Edward Scully, Wm. Primace. Sergeant Murphy (King's Dragoon Guards) Bernard Roddy, Rev. John Carroll, Mrs. Morris, Mrs. Todd, John O'Donnell, Mrs. L. Donnelly, Maria McArdle, Patrick Mahar, Charles Toel, Alex. Davidson, E. Power, (Kings Dragoon Guards), Mrs. Duff, Annie McKenna, Catharine Doyle, etc.

Father Gordon was most thorough and conscientious in all his undertakings. He built churches at Niagara, Niagara Falls, Trafalgar, Toronto Gore, and Adjala. He was very practical and carefully looked after the spiritual welfare of his flock, as evidenced by the following correspondence in which he insists on Col. Kingsmill allowing the Catholic soldiers stationed here at the time, to attend mass, as there was a number of Catholic non-commissioned officers and privates who were not permitted to be present at the morning services, the Colonel claiming that the regimental doctor made his examination at that particular time.

Letter from Father Gordon to Colonel Kingsmill, dated "Saturday morning, April 13th, 1839."

"Sir—I regret to find that the Catholic soldiers of your regiment do not attend Divine service on the Sunday mornings. They have not been in the church on the forenoon of Sunday but once since the time I first had the honor to speak to you

in their behalf. Divine Service commences on Sunday mornings at eleven o'clock, precisely, at which hour you will have the kindness to allow them in future to attend.

I have the honor to be sir, etc., Edward Gordon,  
Catholic Pastor of Niagara.

The soldiers were permitted to attend mass for a few Sundays after dispatching the above letter, when they again failed to be present, and on inquiry, Father Gordon learned that the Colonel had again prevented them. Another lengthy letter of explanation was sent by the priest to the colonel in which he states, "All Catholics are obliged in conscience to give their attendance during the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass which is always offered up to God only in the forenoon." No attention being paid to his repeated requests, Father Gordon then laid the matter before the Major General, commanding the forces in Canada, who immediately commanded Col. Kingsmill to permit his Catholic soldiers to attend Divine Service at the hour named by their chaplain.

Father Gordon was removed to Hamilton in 1846 and was elevated to the dignity of Vicar General. He died at the Episcopal residence, Hamilton in 1870.

The next in succession was Father John Carroll who remained in charge of this mission until about 1855. He accepted a chaplaincy in Chicago, where he died in 1891, having reached the venerable age of 93 years. He was a generous subscriber towards the building fund of the church, as his name frequently appears on the different lists for a substantial sum. He was a distant relation of the Carrolls, of Carrollton, one of whom signed the Declaration of Independence, he was also a nephew of Rev. Edmund Burke, mentioned earlier in this article.

Fathers Leveque, Cullen, Boyle, Musard and Wardy each remained but a short term here, and thus we arrive at the year 1857, when Father Mulligan assumed the charge of Niagara Parish. While here he worked most zealously, being an ardent advocate for the cause of temperance, he also had three sister of St. Joseph's Order, installed as teachers in the Separate School in 1857. This school was built on a corner of the church property about 1842, as we are informed by a resident of the town that he went to school there in 1843, and there was a meeting held in it in 1844 to consider the matter of putting pews in the church. The school was in a flourishing condition for a number of years and many excellent scholars received their early training within its walls. Father

John Kennedy had been one of its pupils. This promising young priest was drowned near Penetanguishene.

This school was eventually closed in 1876 owing to the depletion of the Catholic congregation.

Father Mulligan was removed from here in 1862 and was given the charge of Niagara Falls Parish in which place he remained for several years. In 1866 he was inducted as pastor of St. Catharines and Dean of the Niagara Peninsula. He labored in that parish for about nineteen years with untiring zeal, but in 1884 his health had become so impaired that his physician advised a sea voyage, which suggestion was immediately acted upon and he went to Ireland, where his aged mother still lived. He never rallied sufficiently to return, but died in the land of his birth, in the arms of his mother.

Father James Hobin was next in succession. This resoled but pious priest was endowed with great mental gifts, being considered one of the best theologians of his day. He was very ready to assist the needy and distressed in a practical as well as a spiritual manner. He was succeeded by Father T. J. Sullivan in 1868 who only remained about a year. During his short pastorate here he began the refurnishing of the Presbytery and Sanctuary. He was removed to Thorold in 1869 and installed there as pastor where he still remains one of Thorold's most prominent figures, laboring with his wonted energy for the salvation of souls.

Father Kelly was next appointed in 1869. He purchased a small pipe organ for the church, but it was so badly damaged during a severe thunderstorm when the lightning struck the church that it became practically useless. It was replaced by a smaller organ which was presented to the church by the late Mr. Joseph Petley.

Rev. Dean Harris in his history of "the Catholic Church in the Niagara Peninsula" relates to an amusing incident which occurred during Father Gordon's periodical visit at Toronto Gore. A young man named Sweeney desired to have his child baptised. When asked by the priest the name he wished to give the child, the young man replied, "Vanus your Reverence". What! said Father Gordon. "Why you rascal, I'll never give a Catholic child the name of a heathen goddess." "Well, your reverence," replied Sweeney, "that's my father's name." "Nonsense, man, replied the priest, no Catholic priest, particularly an Irish one, would give her name to any child, male or female, so go and get your father before a drop of water goes on the head of this helpless infant. When the father entered, the priest asked him, "What's your baptismal name, Sweeney". "Vanus, yer reverence,"

replied the man. "Why my good man, surely you never got that name at baptism?" "No Sir," answered Sweeney, "I was baptized Sylvanus, but the neighbors always call me Vanus for short."

Father Laboureau succeeded Father Kelly in 1871. He was highly educated and a good musician. He had a marked individuality and wielded a great influence for good among his parishioners. He made a number of necessary improvements around the church property, but was taken from here in 1872 and given the charge of the parish at Penetanguishene, where he still remains. He has had erected at Penetanguishene a magnificent memorial church to the early Jesuit martyrs which will be a lasting monument to commemorate their heroic deeds and glorious martyrdom and will also bear testimony to the energy and zeal of its founder.

Father Berrigan, appointed in 1872, remained in charge until 1874. He was a strict disciplinarian and took a deep interest in the education of the children, carefully looking after their material as well as spiritual welfare. He died in 1904.

Fathers A. J. O'Reilly (1874—1876) P. J. Kierman (1876—1878) and E. F. Gallagher (1878—1879) followed in succession. Those devoted priests neglected no opportunity of adding to the "treasure store of piety" and religious fervor, which is the strength and glory of a parish. Father P. J. Harold next assumed the charge of the parish in 1879 and remained until 1882, when he was temporarily succeeded by Rev. A. M. Murphy, O.C.C., a priest of the Carmelite Order. In 1884 Father Harold again took charge, remaining here until 1888, when Father T. M. Shanahan was appointed pastor. This talented young priest was soon obliged to resign his parochial duties and leave Niagara on account of ill health, bearing with him the affection and regret of the parishioners. He died shortly after his departure from here and his early death caused a heartfelt sorrow.

In 1890 Father Harold was a third time appointed pastor of this mission. He found the church and Presbytery in urgent need of repairs and being very energetic and exceedingly resourceful as to ways and means, he at once set to work to make the necessary improvements. The church was so thoroughly renovated from foundation to cross, that it will, we trust, weather a few more decades. The Presbytery or "Glebe House" was sold and removed from the premises, under Father Harold's supervision, and was replaced by a much larger and more commodious structure, which contains all the modern improvements, including furnace, electric light, etc. Those

very necessary changes and repairs were made with very moderate expense to the congregation.

Father Harold possessed the gift of imparting knowledge in a remarkable degree and being a lover of children, he made them his special care, "and in teaching them the way to live, he taught them how to die." He was an accomplished classical scholar and gifted with great literary ability. He wrote a very interesting Historic Romance of the First Century, "Irene of Corinth," the contents of which are both fascinating and instructive.

Being a practical musician, the choir, which was in a lethargic condition, also came in for a large share of his attention and time. The late Father Brennan, who was also a lover of sacred music, devoted much of his spare time to the choir and presented it with a number of pieces of valuable music.

The earliest choir consisted of members belonging to the band of the regiments stationed at Niagara, and later it was conducted by Sergeant Charles Conroy, who, at present, resides in Ottawa, but who will no doubt be remembered by many residents of the town, for being an ardent admirer of the old town, he never forgets to pay it an occasional friendly visit.

A small melodeon was presented to the church by a friend and Mrs. Newton (nee McDougal) took charge of this and directed the choir for years with the assistance of Mr. Conroy, with great success. Miss Allinson (now Mrs. Richards) on the resignation of Mrs. Newton, then took charge of the choir, being a mere child at the time, and with the most untiring devotion and fidelity she played the organ, taught and directed the choir for years. Needless to say her success was remarkable. She also devoted much of her time to the instruction of the children in her class in Sunday School, and she did not relinquish her self-imposed but extremely praiseworthy tasks until a short time before her marriage. She organized a large Choral Society which was composed of members of all denominations. Several very successful concerts were given by this society, the proceeds from some of them being given for the benefit of the Public Library, in which institution she was much interested. It is often said, there is no one who cannot be done without. This no doubt is true, but Mrs. Richards was one of the few who left a very large niche to be filled in the hearts of the congregation of St. Vincent de Paul, and not alone in the Catholic congregation, for her departure was sincerely regretted by all lovers of music, irrespective of creed.

After Mrs. Richard's departure, the following ladies took charge of the organ and choir for a short time:—Miss Murphy

(now Mrs. Mooney) Mrs. Lamb, Miss McFaul and Miss Robinson.

Miss Walsh then took the choir and presided as organist for several years with much ability and success. Her strength not being sufficient to sustain the strain which the duties entailed, she eventually resigned the position. Mr. Mulholland is the present organist and director of the choir, which position he has held for over six years with admirable executive ability and characteristic modesty. It may be stated here that in no instance, has any of the organists or members of the choir received any recompense for their services other than perhaps a limited quantity of judicious praise, tempered with healthy criticism.

In 1894 Rev. Father Harold took his departure from here and was succeeded by Father Jno. J. Lynch in the same year. Energetic, zealous and scholarly, Father Lynch, apparently, had every prospect of many years of splendid opportunity before him to labor for the salvation of souls, but our Lord had willed otherwise. During his short sojourn here he was respected and beloved by his parishioners, not only because of his devotion to duty, his compassion for the sick and poor, without respect to race or creed, but also because of the affectionate warmth of his heart, his never failing courtesy and interesting personality. He had so endeared himself to all both Catholic and Protestant, as "never to estrange a friend or create an enemy." "He was of youth the guardian and of all, the friend." His life was closed in the morning of his priesthood, on the 9th of Sept., 1897. He was buried in St. Vincent de Paul's Cemetery, where a monument was erected to his memory by his parishioners bearing the following inscription—

"We hold his name in benediction...."

"To the memory of Rev. Father Lynch, who for three years was pastor of this parish. He died Sept. 9th, 1897, in the 34th year of his age and the 10th of his priesthood. Eternal rest give to him Oh! Lord."

After the death of Father Lynch in 1897 the Carmelite Fathers were requested to take charge of the parish, by Archbishop Walsh, and Father A. M. Murphy, O.C.C. again officiated here, until 1899, when he was removed and Father A. D. Brennan assumed the charge. His term of office was only temporary, for being a highly educated man, he was transferred to Chicago, where he filled the duties of Professor of Theology in the Carmelite College there. Shortly after going there his health failed him and he was obliged to return to the Hospice at Niagara Falls. He died in 1903, "He needs no

tears who lived a noble life," Father Murphy returned here after Father Brennan was removed and continued to officiate until 1902, when Father D. F. O'Malley took charge, Father Murphy having been selected to fill the position of Prior of the Carmelite College at Chicago. Father O'Malley, being a very eloquent speaker, was removed from Niagara after a short stay here and was succeeded by Father Murphy, this being the fourth time the Niagara Parish was committed to his care. Father Murphy was heartily welcomed by his parishioners on each occasion of his return, as he had endeared himself to all by his unobtrusive virtues and simplicity of manner, never sparing himself where duty called him, but in every instance yielding his services unstintingly on behalf of his flock. He was removed from here in 1904, when Archbishop O'Connor received the parish back from the Carmelite Order and once more placed a secular priest in charge, viz: Rev. Father McEachern, who is the present incumbent.

The Presbytery has just now been thoroughly refitted and partly refurnished, owing to the laudable enterprise and energy on the part of several of the ladies and gentlemen of the parish. The congregation generously contributed the requisite funds and as a result, the presbytery presents a very pleasing and comfortable appearance.

This sketch would be incomplete were we to omit the names of such generous unselfish supporters of the church as Messrs. Peter Clarke, George Greene, Patrick Healey and James Doyle, who, with others, deserve more than passing mention herein, would space permit. Suffice it to say they will live in affectionate remembrance in the hearts of the people of the parish. With the exception of Mr. Clarke, who returned to Ireland after the death of his wife, and eventually died there, they are resting peacefully in the little cemetery of St. Vincent de Paul in the rear of the church. In the cemetery also repose many of the pioneer residents of the early church, notably Mrs. Stevenson, who is mentioned in the old Niagara Gleaner, 1832, as performing a work of mercy by sending comforts to the prisoners. In the McDougal family plot is the grave of Colonel McDougall, whose name appears as chairman on the original set of Resolutions drawn up in 1831, previous to the erection of the church. When Bishop McDonell came to Niagara to consecrate, the church, he was entertained at Colonel McDougall's. Adjacent to the McDougall plot is a sarcophagus in which lie the remains of John Lyons, registrar for many years. His name appears on the records of a meeting held on Easter Monday, 1835, as Secty. Treasurer for that year. There is a tablet erected in the church with the

following inscription:—"To the memory of Lieut. Adj't. Reginald McDonnell, Royal Canadian Rifle Regiment, who died at Niagara, C.W., on the 20th Dec. 1851, aged 39 years. This tablet is erected by his brother officers as a testimony of regard." His remains are interred in the graveyard and a stone with a similar inscription marks the spot. Hundreds of other dear departed friends rest in our little graveyard, in fact it would be difficult to find one in the parish who has not some beloved relative resting there. "And with the morn those angel faces smile, which we have loved and lost ere yet awhile."

In collecting the facts contained in this sketch, I have consulted "Galinee's Narrative, "The History of the Catholic Church in the Niagara Peninsula", by Dean Harris; "History of the Church in Niagara" by Rev. P. J. Harold. I have also gathered authentic information from a few of the pioneer residents of the town and from ancient records of the parish. Imperfect and unpolished as this narrative is presented to you, it is history. The old pioneers are fast vanishing from our midst but the church of St. Vincent de Paul crowned with the sign of our redemption will bear testimony to their unselfish generosity and unwavering faith.



## MEETINGS

The Regular Meetings are on the second Monday of each month from October to May, except that the Annual Meeting is on the 13th of October.

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## PUBLICATIONS

Of many of our Publications, the edition is exhausted, but we have (Price chiefly 25 cents)

- 5 Reprinted, Sermon of Rev. R. Addison, Historic Houses, etc.
- 11 Reminiscences, reprinted.
- 12 Battle of Fort Geroge, republished from No. 1.
- 13 A Canadian Heroine, St. Vincent de Paul's church, etc.
- 14 Letters of Mrs. Wm. Dummer Powell, 1807-1821.
- 15 Sir Isaac Brock, Count de Puisaye, republished.
- 17 Ten Years of the Colony of Niagara.
- 18 Early History of St. Mark's, Robert Gourlay, etc.
- 19 Inscriptions and Graves in the Niagara Peninsula. Price 40 cents. No. 10, reprinted with additions.
- 20 Reminiscences of Fenian Raid, etc.
- 21 Historical Buildings, Churches, No. 7, reprinted with additions.
- 22 Some Graves in Lundy's Lane.
- 23 Fort Niagara, Col. MacDougal.
- 24 Catalogue.
- 25 Laura Secord, Diary of a Prisoner in Fort Garry, 1869-70.
- 26 Notes on District of Niagara, 1791-3.
- 27 Names only, but much more. No. 1 Company, Niagara.
- 28 The Present Issue.

Our exchange List now numbers over sixty.

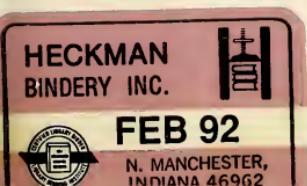
The Historical Room is open every Saturday afternoon from 3 to 5, in winter, and in summer also on Wednesday.

We have now a membership of two hundred and fifty.









FEB 92

N. MANCHESTER,  
INDIANA 46962

